

Orbital – IBM WebSphere MQ Health Check

Over many years, IBM's WebSphere MQ (WMQ) software has become the De Facto standard for mission-critical, assured and one-time-only message transfer across multiple industries; e.g. Financial Services organisations where any message delay can have severe and costly ramifications. WMQ provides a Universal Messaging Backbone on distributed platforms to connect virtually any commercial IT system. Orbital's experience and expertise from working with WMQ in it's many guises mean we are well positioned to offer advice on getting the most out of the technology, for both new installations and existing environments.

WMQ is a complex tool, with many intricacies that may not be obvious at first glance. Examples include performance degradation (sometimes up to 100 times slower than is achievable) and/or a loss of message assurance as a result of using default settings. In addition, versions of WMQ may go out of support without a client being aware – potentially a high risk should you have a system failure and need to place a support call on IBM.

The WMQ Health Check Service

Orbital developed this offering as a direct response to client requests for help with their MQ environments. Each client situation is unique, and as a result, we operate a flexible approach to the service, based around our own framework methodology (see below).

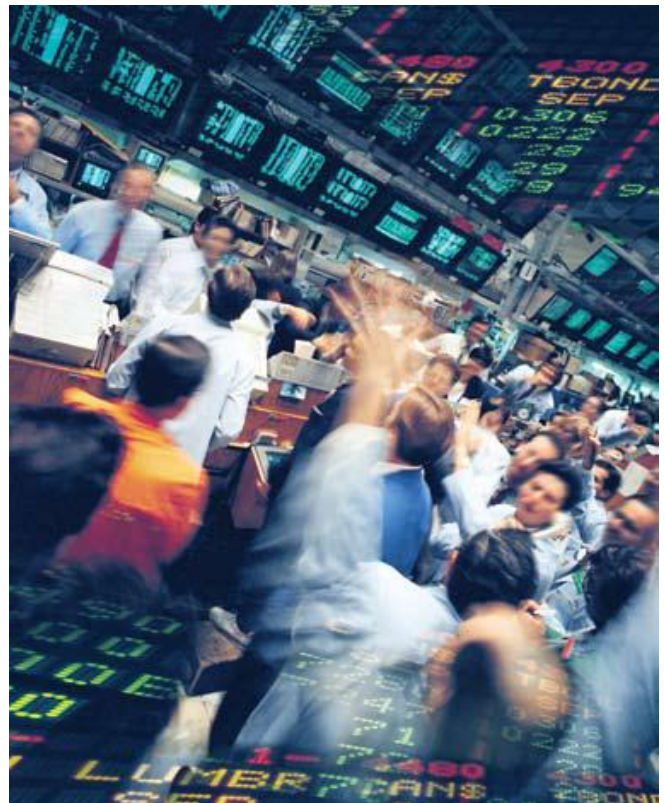
A typical engagement would require 5 days consultancy to complete, however this depends on the size and complexity of your setup + which areas are to be reviewed. This service is always carried out by certified WMQ specialists.

Business case examples

- Mergers & Acquisitions or new requirement to exchange messages with 3rd party organisations – requiring integration/expansion of your WMQ environment.
- New compliance regulations to adhere to – e.g. more stringent Disaster Recovery policy, formal audits etc. Orbital can provide an independent benchmark report.
- Known technical issues with your WMQ environment that cannot be satisfactorily fixed by usual support channels
- Planned changes (e.g. upgrades) to hardware, applications or WMQ itself
- Where WMQ is planned to communicate with WebSphere Message Broker (WMB)

Methodology

- Project scoping phase – Orbital consultant and client team discuss current and future use/requirements of WMQ; known issues; defined goals for the project.
- Analysis phase – detailed review of current WMQ environments.
- Write-up / Report phase – to include known problem areas (by severity), fixes, benchmarking and suggested next steps.
- Debrief phase – presentation back to client on findings.



Key Areas of Potential Improvement

- Messaging Architecture
- OS Configuration
- Installation procedures
- Logging Configuration
- Message Exits
- Clustering / Disaster Recovery Setup
- Queue Manager Settings
- Queue/Channel Settings
- SSL Usage
- Benchmarking
- Monitoring / Reporting

The Wider WMQ Portfolio:

IBM WebSphere MQ File Transfer Edition (WMQ LLM)

IBM WebSphere MQ File Transfer Edition is the newest member of the WebSphere MQ family, building on the WebSphere MQ heritage of proven reliability and wide connectivity, by leveraging the existing network of enterprise grade queue managers to address many IT challenges associated with file transfer (e.g. reliability and security of FTP).

IBM WebSphere MQ Advanced Message Security (WMQ AMS)

This provides flexible security services to protect your application's messages with application-level protection and centralized security policy administration for ease of deployment and operation. It ensures the integrity and privacy of all messages, even when at rest in queues.

IBM WebSphere MQ Low Latency Messaging (WMQ LLM)

This is a recent addition to the WMQ family of products, offering a message transport solution that is highly optimised for the very high volume (millions of messages per second), low-latency (sub-millisecond) requirements of financial services firms. Applications include high-speed delivery of market, trade and reference data in or between front, middle and back-office operations.

WMQ Monitoring Solution

IBM Tivoli Monitoring (ITM) is a software solution that enables clients to monitor their hardware, operating systems, applications, databases etc. Developed from the IBM acquired Omegamon product-set, ITM is highly regarded for its pro-active monitoring and automated fault management, and has a specialised module for Business Integration – e.g. WMQ environments. This means you can monitor real-time status on availability and performance of your WMQ servers; use out-of-the-box functionality to detect common WMQ problems and then notify administrators or use automated actions to implement fixes before they affect end-users. You can also manage configuration and collect monitoring information for reporting, performance analysis, trend predictions and enterprise wide business impact assessment. As a long-standing partner of IBM with skills in both Tivoli and WebSphere, Orbital is well placed to offer this packaged solution, enabling businesses to ensure continued service of their core MQ processes....

About Orbital:

Orbital has been a leading IT solutions provider for 15 years, with a focus on delivering world-class IT solutions on-time and on-budget, and to consistently exceed our client's expectations.

The company maintains a strong partnership with IBM, in order to provide best-of-breed technology offerings in the Enterprise Integration and Systems + Storage Management arenas. Orbital also offers a uniquely flexible approach to IT Consultancy – with an experienced pool of resource constantly being refreshed and updated with the latest skills as per market demands.

We provide technical capabilities in specific technology fields, as well as the more generic but highly important areas of Project Management and Business Analysis.

Orbital operate a consistent and proven Services framework approach to ensure project success. In addition, we have a bespoke Software Development and Support division meaning we are well positioned to meet your end-end requirements, (design and architecture, implementation, test and support) or at any specific point in a project lifecycle.

This structure enables Orbital to be agile enough to meet the complex needs of our clients both today and tomorrow.

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